

This Month's Feature

Summer Veggies and NC Shrimp

August is here and lucky for us North Carolina is still in full swing giving us lots of fresh NC vegetables and seafood to choose from to finish out the summer. These recipes feature just a few examples of what is still in season. Stop by your farmers market or roadside stand because we also have sweet corn, gala apples, zucchini, cucumbers, cantaloupe and watermelon just to name a few. We also have plenty of NC seafood coming in from our coast so look for those signs in your grocery store. Enjoy the rest of your summer with fresh North Carolina fruits, vegetables and seafood.

Clare Turner's Pickled Shrimp

2 pounds of medium NC shrimp, cooked and peeled
2 lemons, thinly sliced
2-3 medium onions, sliced
10-12 whole bay leaves

Layer the shrimp, lemon slices, bay leaves and onions, repeating twice in a covered container.

Marinade

1-cup vegetable oil
2-3 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
Pepper to taste
3 shots of Texas Pete
1 ½ cups apple cider vinegar
1-teaspoon ground mustard
2-teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon paprika

Mix together with a whisk and pour marinade over the layers of shrimp and cover. Refrigerate 24 hours and drain. Remove the lemons and bay leaves. Serve with crackers.

PERSONAL Note: This is a wonderful appetizer! I leave my bay leaves and lemons in the dish when I serve it because all the color is beautiful on the plate. Just tell your guests not to eat those but to enjoy the shrimp with a little of the onion. Thanks to Clare for sharing this delicious recipe!

Squash Casserole

2 pounds yellow summer squash, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1 Tablespoon, margarine
1 can cream of chicken soup
8 oz. sour cream
½ cup margarine, melted
8 oz. Pepperidge Farms Herb Dressing Mix
Salt and Pepper to taste

Boil the squash and onion until tender; drain and season with salt and pepper and 1 TBSP of margarine. Stir in the soup and sour cream. In another bowl mix the dressing mix and ½ cup melted margarine. Pour ½ the stuffing mixture into the squash mixture and stir. Put in a 2-quart casserole dish or a 9X13-baking dish. Top with remaining stuffing mixture. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes.

PERSONAL Note: I have enjoyed this casserole at every family function for as long as I can remember. My Aunt Celeste would always make it and we always ate every bite. Now I enjoy serving it and taking it to family gatherings.

Eggplant Pie

1 eggplant, diced
1 (9-inch) pre-baked deep-dish piecrust
1-cup mozzarella
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
½ jar tomato sauce (any kind you prefer)
¼ cup fresh Italian parsley
¼ cup chopped green onion
½ tsp. oregano
½ tsp. fresh thyme OR ¼ tsp. ground thyme
1-2 TBSP olive oil
Salt and Pepper to taste

Dice your eggplant and sauté it over med.-high heat with salt, pepper and olive oil until golden brown.

Layer in your pie crust the eggplant, onion, and herbs. Add salt and pepper if desired. Top with your favorite tomato sauce. Mix together your cheeses and sprinkle on top.

PERSONAL Note: OK, I will be honest. I'm not a big fan of eggplant. But this was really good and different. This is a great recipe for vegetarians.

Confetti Rice

1 box long grain white rice
½ cup assorted peppers, diced (red, green, orange, yellow)
½ - 1 stick margarine
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
¼ cup chopped cilantro

Cook the rice according to the package directions. Add the remaining ingredients and stir until combined and butter is melted. Season to taste.

PERSONAL Note: A quick and easy recipe to jazz up your rice. It can also get the children to eat some veggies. Use whatever peppers you like. The red and yellow are a little sweeter.

Lemon Pasta with Shrimp and Grape Tomatoes

1-Tablespoon Olive Oil
1 Tablespoon minced garlic (2 cloves)
2 cups heavy cream
2 lemons
1-pound pasta (penne, fusilli, bowtie)
1 package (4-8 oz.) arugula
½ cup Parmesan cheese
1 pint grape tomatoes
½ pound NC shrimp, cooked and peeled

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic, and cook for 60 seconds, then add the cream, zest and juice of the lemons, 2 teaspoons salt and 1-teaspoon pepper. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, until it starts to thicken.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil, add 1-tablespoon salt and the pasta, and cook al dente according to the directions on the package, about 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot. Immediately add the cream mixture and cook over medium-low heat for 3 minutes, until the pasta has absorbed most of the sauce. Pour the hot pasta into a large bowl and add the arugula, Parmesan, tomatoes and shrimp. Toss well, season to taste and serve hot.

PERSONAL Note: This recipe is very similar to a favorite of mine from the Barefoot Contessa. I would also suggest substituting basil for the arugula and you can add any summer veggies or chicken instead of shrimp.